The Cauſe and Cure of Diviſ[illegible]

OR,

The way and means for all Chri[illegible] (However they are Diſtinguiſhed or Named) to come to Unity.

Demonſtrated and Pointed out from the *Scriptures of Truth*; *By* RICHARD STAFFORD, *a Scribe Inſtructed therein.*

THE Neceſſity and Obligation of all that call themſelves Chriſtians unto Unity, may be underſtood from what is Written, *Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* But obſerve here how the Apoſtle enforces the Exhortation. *There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all,* Epheſ. 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. There cannot be greater Arguments and Motives then thoſe here mentioned, why that all Chriſtians ſhould keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, becauſe that the Apoſtle here ſaith, *There is one Body, and one Spirit.* And like as one outward Sun doth enlighten many Millions of Inhabitants of this Earth: Even ſo one and the ſelf ſame Spirit of God and of Chriſt, doth actuate all the Children and Servants of God in all their ſeveral Generations, and the Places of their Reſpective Habitations. Even ſo it is meet and right, and follows of

neceſſary Conſequence, that they ſhould be one in Love, Heart and Affection (for ſo much doth Unity ſignify) and alſo where they live near one another, they ſhould do as the firſt Chriſtians did, that is to ſay, *Meet and be all with one accord in one Place, and all they that believed were together, and they continued daily with one accord in the Temple*, Acts 2. 1, 44, 46. For the Worſhip of that Great and one God. *Hear O Iſrael*, and ſo hear this all ye that are in Deed and in Truth his Servants, *The Lord is one God*, Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. So that of the ſame right Conſequence again, If one God is in you all, then alſo ye ſhould be one, as ye ſerve and worſhip, and have Relation unto that one God, who is in you all. And ſo likewiſe it would be, if as there is one faith, ſo they did all keep and adhere only unto that one Rule of Faith and Worſhip, and Manners, which God hath given unto us all in the Holy Scriptures: And if they had all the alike knowledge, and more eſpecially if they were Univerſally Obedient and Conformable unto it, as the firſt Chriſtians were. For that Book of the Lord is but one Truth alſo, and in all things conſiſtent and agreeable with it ſelf.

But in the Parable, unto which the Kingdom of Heaven is likened by that Great Oracle of Truth, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *The Servants of the Houſholder came and ſaid unto him, Sir, Didſt thou not ſow good Seed in thy Field? From whence then hath it tares? He ſaid unto them, an Enemy hath done this*, Mat. 13.27,28. Even ſo the *Good Man of the Houſe* (for ſo he is called, in *Mat.* 20. 11.) The Great Lord and Creatour and Governour of this Great Houſe of the World; He did firſt of all and from the beginning make and conſtitute one Church, and that they ſhould be *one fold, even under one Shepherd*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; And alſo he did *Sowe Good Seed in that Field*, as to preſerve and continue that Unity which he had begun and eſtabliſhed among them; as ſo it doth abundantly appear, by that Law and Precepts he hath given us. *By this ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye Love one another. But from whence then hath it tares? He ſaith unto them, an Enemy hath done this.* So here

here it may be surmised and asked, from whence came these Divisions and that Biting and Devouring one another, amongst those who call themselves Members of the Christian Visible Church (for the Divisions whereof all one as of *Reuben*, who herein was *unstable as water*, and tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine) *There was great thought and searchings of Heart.* Why, *An Enemy hath done all this*; even the Spirit which worketh in the Children of Disobedience. They do disobey some part or other of the written word; and thereupon arise Divisions, and strife and every Evil work. As the Apostle *James* asks the Question, *From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Lusts that War in your Members.* Even so in like manner it may be asked, from whence come that *Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath and Strife*, (all which are the works of the flesh and they exclude from the Kingdom of God, *Gal.* 5. 20, 21.) And Divisions which are now amongst those who call themselves of the outward visible Christian Church, Come they not hence, even of your Lusts (which signifies an Inordinate Coveting, or Sinful Transgression) that are in their Souls? Come they not hence, even from the Spirit of Disobedience, which works in the children thereof? They do proceed from some kind of Disobedience or other. *Like Diotrephes, who Loved the Preheminence*, or some sinful and indirect thing or other do lead them aside.

Or as the wise Man saith, *Lo, this have I found, that God made Man upright, but he hath sought out many Inventions.* Even so he did make Man to Worship himself; and in the beginning he did ordain and constitute this Worship to be in Spirit and in Truth; *For God is a Spirit and they that Worship him, must Worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* And in order to this, He hath given a Rule and Direction for his worship in his word, which is very pure and true, or truth it self. But Alas! Herein Man hath found out many Inventions. *In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their Post by my Posts*, Ezek. 43. 8. He hath intermingled and added many things into the Worship of God, which *God never Commanded, nor came they into his mind*, as himself saith by his

Prophet *Jeremiah*. As to which Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, and conſequently he beſt knows his mind and will, who is alſo the High Prieſt of our Profeſſion, and much greater in the Houſe or Church of God then *Moſes*; *For this Man was therein as a Servant, but Chriſt as a Son*: This ſame Jeſus Chriſt ſaith, *In vain do they Worſhip me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, Mat. 15. 9. And a little after he ſaith, which relates alſo unto the ſame ſubject matter, *Every Plant which my heavenly father hath not Planted, ſhall be Rooted up*, ver. 13. So that both God and his Son Jeſus Chriſt do expreſs a reproof and diſlike of theſe things. What things? That any thing ſhould be offered up unto him in Worſhip, or Sacrifice, or as a Type of Worſhip, *Which he Commanded not, nor entered into his mind*, and which *he never required at their hands*. And that they ſhould either *teach for Doctrines*, or uſe for Worſhip *the Commandments of Men*; as to which, *every Plant that my Heavenly Father hath not Planted, ſhall be Rooted up*.

Now God Almighty declaring his will to be on this manner, it follows by the ſame true and neceſſary conſequence, that every and each thing in the Worſhip of God, which is not of his own Immediate Divine Inſtitution and Appointment, ſhould be laid aſide and not uſed. And it is upon this Account only and for this reaſon only, that they who truly fear God and fear his Name, who are indeed the Diſciples and followers of Jeſus Chriſt, ſo as to Learn of him and to do the things which he ſaith, do not care to comply with, nor conform unto what is the Commandments and Impoſitions of Men in the Worſhip of God.

As for mine own Part, altho I do juſt barely go unto the Church of *England* way and place of Worſhip; Like as Jeſus Chriſt our Lord gave us an Enſample herein. For of him it is Written, *That as his Cuſtom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day*, Luke 4. 16. *And ſtraitway on the Sabbath Day, he went into the Synagogue and Taught*, Mark 1. 21. For as may be underſtood, from *Acts* 13. 15. They were more Noble then thoſe now adays of our National Church. For they would allow of any one who was able ſo to do, *To ſpeak a Word of Exhortatio-*

hortation unto the People. But theſe confine it only to ſuch a ſort of Clergy, who moſt of them are either Ignorant or Unfaithful in the work of the Miniſtry, and they are Blind leaders of the Blind. As to which Jeſus Chriſt ſaith, *If the Blind leadth Blind, both ſhall fall into the Ditch*; Such Prieſts and People ſhall fall into the Bottomleſs Pit: Yet Neverthleſs, Jeſus Chriſt, as his cuſtom was, went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day; Altho the worſhippers therein, both Prieſts and People, had Corrupted their way. So my cuſtom hath been from my youth up and is at this Day, to go unto the Pariſh Synagogues, or Churches, as they are commonly called, altho there are ſome things therein uſed, which have a *ſhew of will Worſhip*, and after the *Ordinances and Precept of Men*; which I ſpeak according to my Judgment, and that alſo Guided by the written Word of Truth, I could wiſh were laid aſide. For according to the afore-mentioned Aphoriſm of Divine Truth, *Every Plant that my Heavenly Father hath not Planted, ſhould be Rooted up.* And alſo the Miniſtry and Teaching thereof in too many Places (I do in no wiſe ſay that it is ſo every where) is grown and become Dead, dull and formal. It continues to be fulfilled at this Day what *Jeremiah* ſpoke of in his time, that the Paſtours were become Brutiſh. *The Prieſts ſaid not, Where is the Lord? And they that handle the Law knew me not: The Paſtours alſo Tranſgreſſed againſt me, and walked after things that do not profit*, Jer. 2. 8. And ſome of them at this Day and even in this Nation, *Do not Profit the People at all*, Jer. 23. 32. Or very little, but both Prieſts and People have Corrupted their way, having a form of Godlineſs, but denying the Power thereof. So that, altho from the Example of Chriſt and by what he ſaith, *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. I can juſt go unto their Aſſemblies, yet I can in no wiſe conſent unto all their ways without Violating Faith and a Good Conſcience. And becauſe I do *fear an Oath* (which the Spirit of God, in *Eccleſ.* 9. 2. Doth ſeem to commend and prefer before him *that feareth not an Oath*) and I would alſo willingly ſtand *faſt in that Liberty, wherewith Chriſt hath made us free*, According to that Rule and Command of the Divinely inſpired Apoſtle, therefore only it is, that I am not allowed, nor admitted of to Preach in the uſual Places of Preaching.

But as *Paul* did, ſo I do *Preach in an Houſe*, Acts 28. 30, 31. *The Kingdom of God, and Teach thoſe things which concern Jeſus Chriſt.* And becauſe, *that on me alſo is laid a neceſſity to Preach the Goſpel, and Wo unto me, if I Preach it not*, I had rather therefore *utter my Voice in the ſtreets, and cry in the chief Place of Concourſe, and in the opening of the Gates, and in the City utter my Words*, Prov. 1. 20, 21. *And Teach in the ſtreets*, Luke 13. 26. According to that Goſpel method (all which ſhall turn for a Teſtimony againſt them) rather then wholly neglect it. If thoſe of our National Prieſthood would impoſe and require no more then what Chriſt and his Apoſtles did Ordain, Inſtitute, Impoſe and Require, Perhaps I might be of their Number; but ſeeing that they do require and inſiſt upon ſuch and ſuch things, which the Goſpel doth not inſiſt on nor require; *As to which they ſhall give Account before him, that is ready to Judge the Quick and Dead at his appearing.* And as for my Part, *I had rather be a Miniſter of the ſanctuary and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord hath pitched and not Man*, Heb. 8. 2. Knowing and Believing, that that Tabernacle which Man hath Pitched and not the Lord (by which the Worſhip of God is ſignified; for that was the place wherein God is Worſhipped) is falſe, for it is oppoſite unto the other, and will be rejected and diſallowed by him.

As it is Written, *Then verily the firſt Covenant had alſo Ordinances* (in the Margent there it is Ceremonies) *Of Divine ſervice and a Worldly ſanctuary*, Heb. 9. 1. So it may be affirmed at this Day, that what is called the National Church, or the Church of *England*, hath truly Ordinances or Ceremonies of Divine Service, and a Worldly kind of Religion, modelled after the faſhion of and according to the Courſe of this World. Now as People may in their reaſon conceive, that if one ſhould now Worſhip God after the manner of the firſt Covenant, which had Ordinances, or Ceremonies of Divine Service and a Worldly ſanctuary, Do ye think that the Lord would accept thereof and be well pleaſed therewith? In no wiſe. And ſo it is to be feared and may be thought as to that manner of Worſhip now a-days, which hath Ordinances and Ceremonies of Divine Service and a

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Worldly ſanctuary, that God in theſe latter days under the diſpenſation of his Son, doth find fault with that alſo, for the ſame reaſon as he doth the other. For as the Divinely inſpired Apoſtle Argues and Reaſons concerning that, *Which was a Figure for the Time then preſent, in which were offered both Gifts and Sacrifices, that could not make them that did the ſervice perfect as pertaining to the Conſcience. Which ſtood only in Meats and Drinks, and Divers waſhings, and Carnal Ordinances* (In the Margent there again, it is Rites or Ceremonies) *Impoſed on them until the Time of Reformation*, Heb. 9. 9, 10. Now to uſe and retain the figure ſtill, when the thing figured is come, this muſt be Nonſenſe and Abſurdity, and God is not pleaſed with, nor yet doth accept of the Sacrifice of Fools. And ſo if there is any thing in ſuch a way of Worſhip, which cannot make him that doth the ſervice, or uſes that kind of worſhip perfect, as pertaining to the Conſcience, it is evident that here People ſhould not always reſt therein, but go further and preſs ſtill after the mark of the high Calling, after thoſe things which can, or at leaſt in more meaſure, make them that do the Service, or uſe the Worſhip Perfect, as pertaining unto the Conſcience. And as the *Jewiſh* Worſhip did ſtand only in Meats and Drinks, and Divers Waſhings, and Carnal Ordinances Impoſed on them until the time of Reformation: So it may be obſerved, that the National Worſhip doth ſomewhat conſiſt in Meats; for it doth preſcribe its Meat days and its Fiſh days; and in Divers Bowings and Geſtures, and ſuch and ſuch kind of Rites and Ceremonies, are to be obſerved and impoſed upon the People *by the Precept of Men*, Iſa. 29. 13. Not here throughly conſidering and attending unto the laſt Words. Which ſhould indeed cut off and abrogate them all, *Until the time of Reformation*, which now being fully come under the Goſpel, the Diſpenſation of the Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt being the High Prieſt of our Profeſſion, and who is Greater in the Houſe of God then *Moſes* was, for he was as a Servant, but this Man as a Son; It doth, or ſhould follow of Conſequence, that if we would (to which we are Commanded) ſtand faſt in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free. In order to that,

we ſhould admit or ſuffer nothing to be impoſed on us after the way of Carnal Ordinances, or as Ordinances of Divine ſervice, or by way of Rites and Ceremonies; By the Ordinances of Men, unleſs Chriſt hath alſo ordained the ſame in his Goſpel. For that alſo ſerves unto the Example and Shadow of Heavenly things. *As* Moſes *was Admoniſhed of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle; for ſee (ſaith he) that thou make all things according to the Pattern ſhewed to thee in the Mount*, Heb. 8. 5. But as Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſaith, *But the hour cometh and now is, when the true Worſhippers ſhall Worſhip the Father in Spirit and in Truth: For the Father ſeeketh ſuch to Worſhip him. God is a Spirit, and they that Worſhip him, muſt Worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*, John 4. 23, 24. So now the fullneſs of time is come and under this Diſpenſation of his Son, all things in, or pertaining to the Worſhip of God and of Jeſus Chriſt, ought to be done according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in his Goſpel. I ſay and repeat it again, that People may more attend unto and obſerve the ſame, *That in theſe Days, every thing in the Worſhip of God and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, ought to be made and done according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel.* This I do teach and affirm conſtantly.

So that, as aforenoted, ſuch and ſuch things were impoſed on People, *until the Time of Reformation.* But that being now fully come, It follows from hence, that there ſhould be yet a further Reformation even in our reformed Churches, that is, to bring them up or back again unto a Greater Degree of Spirituality and Truth; And to do all things according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel. For then only Primitive times would return (*When they were all with one accord in one Place, and all that believed were together*) When things ſhall be once again done according to the Primitive Rule and Manner. When as it is Written, *A great Number of the Prieſts were Obedient unto the Faith.* So again ſome Good thing might be then expected for the Church of God, and for the Unity thereof. If the Prieſts or Clergy of this Nation were ſo Univerſally Obedient unto the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, as to prefer the Truth of his Worſhip

ſhip before their own temporal Livelihood, Corrupt Intereſt, or *filthy Lucre*, 1 Pet. 5. 2. So that there might be the ſame mind in them alſo which was in the Apoſtle *Paul*; As to count all things but Loſs or Dung, for the excellency of the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. And as he ſaith, *For I could wiſh my ſelf were accurſed from Chriſt for my Brethren, my Kinſmen according to the fleſh.* So they could be contented to be deveſted of all things for the Glory of God, and for the Truth of his Worſhip, then indeed, but not until then ſome good thing might be expected for the Church of God and for the Unity thereof.

But as long as Corrupt Intereſt hath the prevailing and upper hand, things will ſtill continue as they are. For this hath been the ſubtlety of Satan the old Serpent, who herein, *was more ſubtle then any Beaſt of the Field.* To get his threſhold, or a *threſhold* of Mans making and deviſing, *To be ſet by Gods threſholds*, which his Prophet doth reprove and find fault with, in *Ezek.* 43. 8. *And their Poſt by my Poſts*; and then Satan the Enemy gets it to be confirmed and eſtabliſhed by Annexing ſuch a National Maintenance and Livelihood, and ſuch and ſuch Preferments unto it. For thoſe outward things, as the *Kingdoms and Power and Glory of this World* (under which Riches and Money, the greateſt Idol thereof is alſo included) *Are delivered unto him*; *ſo that to whomſoever he will, he gives it*, according to what is Written, *Luke* 4. 6.

Thus and hereby it comes to paſs, that thoſe great Aſſertors and Vindicators of Rites and Ceremonies, and of thoſe Ordinances and Inſtitutions of Men, who are Miniſters of the Worldly ſanctuary, which Man hath pitched and not the Lord, who have ſet their threſhold by Gods threſholds, and their Poſt by his Poſts, do therefore contend with might and main for their own Traditions and Impoſitions, and their own Interminglings with the Worſhip of God, whereby they have Corrupted it from its Simplicity and Purity, as it was in Chriſt Jeſus, in the firſt times. Nevertheleſs they will in no wiſe conſent, nor yet admit of it, that they ſhould be laid aſide, nor yet that thoſe Plants which our Heavenly father hath

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not Planted, ſhould be Rooted up. Altho it be according to his expreſs Will and Declaration, that they ſhould be laid aſide; yet nevertheleſs they do and will retain them, *Any Law or Ordinance of God to the contrary Notwithſtanding*, whereby it is evident, that they do *Provoke the Lord to Jealouſy and Indignation*; So that he will not accept of their Worſhip.

But yet for all, they do thus and thus, for the ſame and alike reaſon, which we read of, in *Acts* 19. *And the ſame time there aroſe no ſmall ſtir about that way. For a certain Man Named* Demetrius, *a Silverſmith, which made Silver ſhrines for* Diana, *brought no ſmall Gain unto the Crafts-men, whom he called together with the Work-men of the like Occupation; and ſaid, Sirs, ye know that by this Craft, we have our wealth. Moreover ye ſee and hear that not alone at* Epheſus, *but almoſt throughout all* Aſia, *this* Paul *hath perſwaded and turned away much People, ſaying, that they be no Gods which are made with hands. So that not only this our Craft is in danger to be ſet at naught; but alſo that the Temple of the Great Goddeſs* Diana, *ſhould be deſpiſed, and her Magnificence ſhould be deſtroyed, whom all* Aſia *and the World Worſhippeth.* So that this was in a matter of Worſhip alſo. But further, ſince that the Nations have been brought over from the Worſhip of Dumb Idols unto the true living and only God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and of all things therein; yet ſtill there hath been all along no ſmall ſtir about the way and manner of the worſhip of this true God. The main Controverſie, Queſtion and Doubt therein hath been chiefly as to this Point, whither God is to be ſerved and worſhipped according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel, as *Moſes* was Admoniſhed of God, for ſaith he ſee that thou do all things according to the Pattern ſhewed to thee in the Mount. And now in theſe laſt days under the Diſpenſation of the Son of God, *All the Rudiments of the World*, with all the *Jewiſh* Ordinances and Obſervances (*Which all are to Periſh with the uſing*) *the Commandments and Doctrines of Men*, Col. 2. 22. They having been all aboliſhed and done away, ever ſince that Jeſus Chriſt, the High Prieſt of our Profeſſion ſaid that it was finiſhed on the Croſs; which is ſo as to all that diſ-

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penſation and way of Worſhip. But now the hour being come, wherein People are *not to Worſhip at* Jeruſalem, *nor yet at yonder Mountain. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the father in Spirit and in Truth, for the father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him. God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*, John 4. 23, 24. From this place again, it is evident and manifeſt, that all things now in the Worſhip of God and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, ought to be done according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel. For that is Spiritual and True, yea, Spirit and Truth it ſelf.

So that the ſtir which hath been all along in the Chriſtian Churches about the way and manner of the worſhip of God, hath been as to this Queſtion, whither God ought only to be worſhipped according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel; or whither he is to be worſhipped by the meer Ordinances and Inventions of Men; or whither they alſo ſhould be brought in and intermingled therewith? As to which, they that *contend earneſtly for the faith* (wherein alſo is the worſhip of God included) *which was once delivered unto the Saints*, do alſo contend earneſtly that God ought to be worſhipped only the firſt way; and they are for having every Plant in his worſhip which our Heavenly father hath not Planted, to be Rooted up. But as for the others again, who have ſought and found out many Inventions in the worſhip of God after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men, they are for keeping unto them ſtill, thinking within themſelves and alledging to one another, as *Demetrius* did to his fellow Crafts-men, *Ye know that by this Craft, we have our wealth.* And ſo it is, By theſe Liturgies, Rites, Ceremonies, Traditions and Inſtitutions of our own, we have our Church Preferments and Livelihood; And if we ſhould once yield or conſent unto them, who go about to perſwade and turn away the People, *That as* Paul *ſaid, they be no Gods which are made with hands*: So that is not the worſhip of the true God, which is the *Circumciſion made with hands.* That is not the worſhip of the true God (for he is not pleaſed therewith, nor will accept of it) which is made and deviſed by Man.

However,

However, this Foundation and Truth ſtands firm, it being an Eternal Maxim fixed in the Heavens; Notwithſtanding Men through Corrupt Intereſt would gainſay, or diſtinguiſh againſt it. But if this truth were once Univerſally received into the minds of Men, as indeed it ought to be, ſo as for them to obey it and do accordingly, what would be the Conſequence of all? It follows, *So that not only this our Craft is in danger to be ſet at naught*; We ſhould not only be in danger to loſe our Tythes and Church Revenues, and our Cathedral ſervice would be deſpiſed, and the *Magnificence* and outward ſhew and Pomp of our worſhip would be deſtroyed. Which the Rich and Chief of the People are moſt of all for. Such being the Vanity of their minds, as to falſely think that *God is altogether ſuch an one as themſelves*, Pſal. 50. 21. So that becauſe they like nothing but what is coſtly, and makes a Goodly outward ſhew, thereupon they wrongly imagine as if God was not pleaſed with any worſhip, but what did make an outward ſhew. As to which it is thus Written, *The Kings Daughter* (whereby Myſtically and Spiritually is ſignified the Church of God) *is all Glorious within*, Pſal. 45. 13. *The Kingdom of God cometh not with Obſervation* (in the Margent there it is with outward ſhew) *Neither ſhall they ſay, Lo here, or Lo there; for behold the Kingdom of God is within you*, Luke 17. 21. The true worſhip of God doth not ſtand, nor conſiſt in Divers waſhings or ſprinklings, or in Carnal Ordinances impoſed on the worſhippers until the Time of Reformation (which words do imply that they ſhould be utterly laid aſide now the Time of Reformation is fully come under the Goſpel) nor yet doth the true worſhip of God ſtand or conſiſt ſo much in Divers Bowings and Cringings, or Geſtures, but it is an inward thing; for what is Spiritual or in Spirit, is inward. But they being *vainly puffed up in their fleſhy mind*, Coloſ. 2. 18. Would have Goſpel worſhip, which is altogether an Inward and Spiritual thing, to be ſo modelled and framed, as to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh; and they have got their Worldly Intereſt and Livelihood to be interwoven and mixed therewith.

This

This is the very reaſon why the Errour and Corruption of the Papacy hath been and continued ſo long, even unto this Day, and the *end thereof is not as yet.* The Prieſts and Clergy Men thereof, who may be ſtiled the Corrupters of all, what was before true and undefiled Religion, have got into their hands and poſſeſſions ſuch and ſuch Revenues and Riches and Tythes, and yearly Eſtate, called St. *Peters Patrimony*, and the Patrimony of the Church; and they well knowing the conveniency thereof, and they being in no wiſe willing to part with them, this makes them to ſtickle might and main for their own Errours and Corruptions. And theſe Leaders of the People cauſe them to err, as ſo many Thouſands blindly and miſerably do in what is called a great Part of the Chriſtian World. The like *Errour* and Corruption, altho it be in a much leſs degree and meaſure, remains as yet even in the reformed Church of *England.* For if it were once modelled according to the Pure Word of God, or if all things therein were done according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel; It ſhould be yet further Reformed even from thoſe Rites and Ceremonies, and Carnal Ordinances and Impoſitions of Men. But ſince that there is ſuch a Maintenance and Livelihood ſet out by a National Law to the Clergy-Men thereof, for uſing and keeping thoſe Rites and Ceremonies, and Carnal Ordinances, and Humane Impoſitions. As they have been kept and retained hitherto for this reaſon, ſo in all Likelihood and Probability they will be kept and retained yet longer, any Law or Ordinance of God to the contrary Notwithſtanding. Altho herein alſo our firſt Reformers from out of Popery, ſeemed to have uſed the like method as the Apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians did in reforming from *Judaiſm.* For as they did retain for ſome time a few *Jewiſh* Ceremonies, that they might hereby the ſooner gain and bring over the *Jews*, as *Paul* for this ſame reaſon did Circumciſe *Timothy*: All which *Jewiſh* Ceremonies, the Chriſtian Church did by degrees and at length utterly lay aſide, when there was no Hopes or Likelihood further, to Convert the *Jews* unto the faith. So our firſt Reformers from Popery, did retain ſome Popiſh Ceremonies and a great Part of the Liturgy which was the ſame in the Maſs Book; but ſuch as had nothing of the Leaven or Errour of Popery therein. As the Croſs in Baptiſm, wearing the Surplice, Bowing towards the Altar and ſuch like; If hereby they might ſooner bring over the Papiſts unto their Communion, and accordingly many were, and almoſt all of them did come to their Pariſh Church, until they were forbid to do ſo, by a Bull of the Pope. But ſince that long proceſs of time, it being above an Hundred and Fifty years ſince the Reformation, there is no great Likelihood further of bringing them over by this way and kind of Condeſcention; It is therefore now high time, if they

would

would do as the Apoſtles and Primitive Church did, whilſt it was Pure and Uncorrupted, ſo that now they ſhould lay aſide even thoſe Popiſh Rites and Ceremonies, and Carnal Ordinances, and whatever is meerly an Invention, Doctrine, or Commandment of Men, that all things may be done exactly according to the Pattern ſhewed unto us in the Goſpel. This I do again teach and affirm conſtantly.

And indeed it is written, *For the day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is Proud and Lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low: And the Idols he ſhall utterly Aboliſh*, Iſa. 2.12,18. Now whatſoever is meerly of Mans making and deviſing in the Worſhip of God, that is an *Idol*. So that by true and neceſſary conſequence, whatever is meerly and only of Mans making and deviſing in the Worſhip of God, that ſame ſhould, yea, at length it ſhall be utterly *Aboliſhed* and done away.

And as it is elſewhere written, *Many alſo of them which uſed curious Arts, brought their Books together and burned them before all Men, and they counted the Price of them and found it fifty thouſand Pieces of Silver: So mightily grew the Word of God and Prevailed*, Acts 19. 19, 20. So the time will come that many of thoſe which uſed humane Inventions in the Worſhip of God, altho they had their outward Worldly Livelihood and Preferments by them, will caſt them away to the *Moles and the Bats* (which being blind Creatures, ſo theſe were fit only for Blind and Ignorant Worſhippers) and they will be apt to burn the Books, in which thoſe Inventions of Men were, that they ſhould not be produced and brought forth as a Witneſs and Evidence againſt them in the day of the Lords Judgment and Indignation, *For fear of the Lord and for the Glory of His Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the Earth*, Iſa. 2. 21. And ſo they would do now, if the Word of God did grow mightily and prevail in their Hearts more then the God of this World, or the Spirit which ruleth in the Children of Diſobedience. For altho thoſe who uſed Curious Arts did get their outward Livelihood by them, like as *Aſtrologers* and *Stage Players* do at this day; Yet when they once come to wiſely and throughly conſider, Shall I only to get a little outward Worldly Livelihood for a ſhort time, or for a moment, (for what is our Life but a Vapour which paſſeth away) thereby loſe that Bleſſing, which the Lord our Creatour hath Commanded for ſuch as are his Obedient Children, who keep and do according to his Laws, *even Life for evermore?* Even ſo the Prieſts of the Worldly ſanctuary, and of that Tabernacle which Man hath Pitched and not the Lord, I mean all thoſe aforenamed, might thus reaſon and conſider throughly within themſelves, Shall I, and ſo another may ſay, Shall I, altho I have my outward Livelihood and Preferment by ſuch a way of Worſhip, which is made up of the Inventions or Intermixtures of Men, thereby provoke the Lord to Jealouſie

and

and Indignation, ſo that he will not accept of my Worſhip; and then it will not become unto me a Worſhip to the ſaving of my Soul, ſo that in ſhort, I ſhall loſe Life Eternal, only to get a ſhort Temporal Livelihood in this World. God forbid, far be it from me, this wiſdom can never be juſtified of her Children, for indeed it is the greateſt Folly. Accordingly to what Chriſt Jeſus, the wiſdom of the Father, herein ſpake, *What ſhall it profit a Man if he ſhould Gain the whole World and loſe his Soul? And what ſhall he give in exchange for his Soul?* And thereupon each one ſhould ſmite upon his thigh, and frame a right concluſion that I would not commit Sin nor Practiſe Errour, to get the greateſt Biſhoprick or Arch-Biſhoprick, or even ſo much Revenues as the Pope himſelf hath. For even he hath not the Thouſandth Part of the Revenues of the whole Earth; and if one had that, yet it could not be a ſufficient Compenſation for the loſs of our Soul. And then by conſequence, I for my Part, and ſo another ſhould ſay, till the ſame mind was in them, as was in *Luther* and the other Godly Reformers, I will not conſent with, nor yet bear a Part in that falſe and erroneous Worſhip, altho any Eccleſiaſtical Dignity or Preferment might be beſtowed on me for the ſame. If our *Prieſts alſo were ſo Obedient to the faith*, and zealous for the Truth of his Worſhip, ſo that this mind were once in the Biſhops and Clergy of the *Romiſh*, or of our National Church (which is much better then that, altho ſhe is not clean come out from all the Dregs and Defilements of Popery) then indeed ſome good thing might be expected for the Church of God, and for the Unity thereof.

May it not at this day be truly ſaid unto the Church of *England*, what *John* was Commanded, *Unto the Church of* Thyatira *write, theſe things ſaith the Son of God, who hath his Eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine Braſs, I know thy Works and Charity, and Service and Faith, and thy Patience and thy Works, and the laſt to be more then the firſt. Notwithſtanding, I have a few things againſt thee*, Rev. 2. 18, 19, 20. Notwithſtanding the Church of *England* hath done ſeveral things well, and ſhe hath many things according to the Pattern of the Goſpel, and of the Pure and Primitive Church; Yet nevertheleſs the Spirit of God *hath a few things againſt her*, becauſe ſhe hath not come ſo clean out of *Sodom* (to the Abominations, whereof the *Roman Church* may be compared, for ſhe hath committed Spiritual Whordom and Fornication, and Uncleanneſs in departing away from the Laws and Commandments of God) *ſo as not to leave an hoof behind.* For there ſhould not be in her the leaſt rellick, or remainder of Popery, or what is meerly the Popes, nor yet any other Mans Inſtitutions. But ſhe ſhould have hearkened fully and throughly unto the Call and Requiring of God, ſo as to have done accordingly. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and*

touch

touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you, 2 Cor. 6. 17. even the very Monuments of Idolatry, ſhould be taken away or defaced. The Altars and Groves were to be burnt, cut down, deſtroyed. And we are Commanded not to mention *other Gods nor yet to uſe their Names within our Lips*. And we are to *abſtain from all appearance of Evil*, and to keep our ſelves as far as ever we can from the Accurſed thing; and ſo it ſhould be of every thing that diſpleaſeth the Lord. So likewiſe every thing ſhould be laid aſide in his Worſhip, which is a great thing relating to that God with whom we have to do, which he hath *not Commanded, nor Required, nor entred into his mind*.

Notwithſtanding theſe things ought to be ſo, yet ſtill by reaſon of cuſtom and continuance, and when People have been long uſed unto a thing, they will not be perſwaded off from it, although it be the expreſs Commandment of God to turn away from their Idols and Inventions of their own (which alſo they make an Idol of in cleaving unto them in oppoſition to his Commands) and chiefly, becauſe *by this Craft* and Uſage *they get their Living*; Therefore People will ſtill go on in their *own ways*, and their *Soul delighteth in their Abominations*, Iſa. 66. 3. And ſo they will keep unto their Inventions Impoſed on us, *by the Precept of Men*, Any Law or Ordinance of God to the contrary Notwithſtanding; as here it hath been alledged to the contrary from the Scriptures of Truth, which contain the Declaration and Mind of the moſt high God, who ſaith by his Son Jeſus Chriſt, *In vain do they Worſhip me, Teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, Mat. 15. 9. As to which, again it may be truly reaſoned and inferred, that ſuch People, who in vain do Worſhip God, *Let not thoſe People think, that they ſhall receive any thing of the Lord.*

Whether People will comply therewith or not, Nevertheleſs the *Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, and his Truth endureth to all Generations* firm and unchangeable; Notwithſtanding the People of this World are *Contentious and do not obey the Truth*, through the Temptation of Corrupt Intereſt, and *filthy Lucre*, yet ſtill and all along, the only way and means, which can be underſtood from the Scriptures (which were given by Inſpiration of God, and to make us wiſe unto ſalvation) for all Chriſtians however they are Named or Diſtinguiſhed) to come unto Unity, that they may *with one Heart and Mind Glorify God even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, is to have all things in his worſhip done *according to the Pattern ſhewed to us in the Goſpel, and that every Plant which our Heavenly Father hath not Planted be Rooted up*; And that all the Doctrines and Commandments, and Inventions of Men be utterly aboliſhed and laid aſide, and not uſed at all, *That the Lord alone may be Exalted in that Day.*

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